Elements of the Rules
(from: www.portlandonline.com/)

1. **Motion:** To take particular action on an issue, a motion must be made by a group member (“I move that...”). A motion must be supported by a second individual (called “a second”) and is followed by a group discussion of the substantive issue. At the end of discussion the group will vote on the motion, which depending on the type of motion will require either a majority or three-fourths majority to pass.

2. **Postpone Indefinitely:** This motion is used to kill a motion. When passed, the motion cannot be re-introduced at the meeting in which the motion to postpone was made, but may be re-introduced at a later meeting. The motion is made by stating, “I move to postpone indefinitely...”, and requires a second, followed by a majority vote to pass.

3. **Amend:** This motion is used to change the wording of a current motion under consideration. The motion is made by stating, “I move to amend the motion on the floor...” and requires a second. One vote is taken to accept the amendment to the original motion, and second vote is needed to then accept or reject the newly amended motion.

4. **Commit:** This motion refers an issue to a committee, requires a second, and a majority vote. At the next committee meeting, a report must be prepared on the motion committed. If an appropriate committee exists, the motion goes to that committee. If not, a new committee is established.

5. **Question:** To end a debate immediately a motion is made to “call the question”. The motion needs a second, however, no discussion is necessary. A vote is held immediately and two-thirds vote is required for passage. If the motion passes, the main motion on the floor must be voted on immediately.

6. **Table:** To table a discussion means to suspend discussion on an issue to later in the meeting or to another meeting date. A second, as well as a majority vote is required.

7. **Adjourn:** This motion is to end a meeting. A second and a majority vote is required.

Resources

- http://www.robertsrules.org/
- http://www.caves.org/nss-business/bog/app-r.html
- http://wordnet.princeton.edu/perl/webwn?s=robert's%20rules%20of%20order
- http://www.constitution.org/rror/rror--00.htm
- http://www.managementhelp.org/boards/roberts.htm
- www.parlipro.org/
- http://www.portlandonline.com/

The following site is useful for basic questions about Robert’s Rules of Order:


Citizen Advocacy Center
182 N. York
Elmhurst, IL 60126
Phone: (630) 833-4080
Fax: (630) 833 4083
The Basics

RONR lays out procedures for getting proposals raised, discussed, amended, and voted on in meetings directed by a chairperson. It is based on the belief that through rules for orderly deliberation, a majority can make decisions that will work for the group. The chair presides over the meeting, and if used properly, RONR allows for every group member’s voice to be heard.

There are two main parts to RONR: the “Rules of Order” and “Organizations, Meetings, and Legal Rights of Assemblies”. The Rules of Order contain sections that explain how to conduct business in a deliberative assembly, a general motions classification, privileged motions, incidental motions, subsidiary motions, some main and unclassified motions, the rules of debate and of voting, committees and boards, and the details of the officers and the minutes. The section under organizations, meetings, and assembly legal rights identifies procedural and substantive issues. Organizations that use parliamentary procedure usually follow a fixed order of business such as:

1. Call to order
2. Roll call of members present
3. Reading of minutes of last meeting
4. Officer reports
5. Committee reports
6. Special orders
7. Unfinished business
8. New business
9. Announcements
10. Adjournment

All motions must be seconded, debated, and adopted by a majority vote unless otherwise noted.

How to Adopt RONR

Robert’s Rules of Order Newly Revised, 10th ed. can be adopted as an organization’s parliamentary authority if the organization inserts the following into its bylaws at the appropriate place (RONR, [10th ed.], p. 15, l. 17-25; p. 561-62, 569):

Article #
Parliamentary Authority

“The rules contained in the current edition of Robert’s Rules of Order Newly Revised shall govern in all cases to which they are applicable and in which they are not inconsistent with these bylaws and any special rules of order the Society may adopt.”

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